

Veteran salutes staff, treatment at hospital

Ocala Star Banner

August 9, 2005

<http://www.ocala.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20050809/NEWS/208090323/1099/news01>

Located front page below fold

("Bits and Pieces" column written by Emory Schley twice a week)

I never much liked hospitals. I don't like visiting them. I didn't like working in them. I don't like eating in them. And I definitely don't like being a patient in one of them.

Forty years ago when I was a corpsman at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., it was pretty common to hear both staff members and patients bad-mouthing the Veterans' Administration and its arcane hospital practices.

I haven't kept up with the debates since I got out of the field decades ago, so I was somewhat surprised to receive a letter last week on that very subject.

Ocala's **Robert A. Lewis** wrote: ". . . I've been a faithful reader of your column. I'm just amazed at how adept a man of my generation has become at advertising that he has the cushiest job around and still has it. Hah! I would like to ask a favor while I still can, and my motives are just as blatant as your poo-pooing the excellent job you do. I've been in and out of the VA hospital since I last wrote, with a final diagnosis of aggressive cancer attacking my whole body. To get to this final diagnosis has been a long, arduous process for all the personnel (both in Ocala and Gainesville), and while they have diligently eliminated various other causes, they have never waivered in their professionalism, nor their courtesy to yours truly. I've been blessed in that my wife and I picked Ocala as our home and that the 10 years I served in my beloved Corps has been seen as reason enough to treat me as a special person. The favor I ask is that you let it be known our Vets are receiving first class treatment and there are a lot of dedicated personnel who see to it that they are. I start chemo tomorrow morning on an outpatient basis so I will continue to be a fan of the old geezer with the long hair and the cushiest job."

Robert, I guess the situation in VA hospitals has changed quite a bit over the decades. Glad to hear it. Good luck in your latest battle, and thank you, Sir, for your service to our country! Semper fi!

SIGHTS YOU DON'T see every day: **Edith Moreland**, Marion Landing, wrote to say she spotted two pretty young ladies on horseback waiting for a take-out order at the drive thru window at Wendy's on State Road 200.

Well, Edith, I've seen golf carts used in Drive Thru windows, so why not horses, too? I just hope the equines were "behaving" themselves and being mindful of where they were, and not leaving anything behind in the drive thru lanes.

THEATER CONCESSION prices: **Ron Martin**, SR 200 corridor, wrote: "The costs of concession stand items are outrageous! Many people buy candy at their local store and take it into the theater. What I find offensive are not only the prices asked for items, but also the oversized portions you really don't want. I come from an era when movies were five cents on Saturday and 10 cents on Sundays. Popcorn was three cents a bag and candy bars were a nickel. In those days, on a Saturday,

you could see a double feature, a short, a cartoon, a newsreel and, best of all, a serial featuring someone like **Captain Marvel** or the **Green Hornet**."